372 A few words should be said about lighting. In the houses,
354 which, as we have seen, are windowless and hence quite dark,
the hearth fire /Fig. 43 appears here in the original text/ is at
the same time a much needed source of light. As the Pangwe re-
[173] late in their legends, it was Mode-Sama, one of the first human
beings, who fetched fire (nduăn) from God (Sama); according to
other versions, the fire was given to him by God, and since Mode's
time the fire has not been extinguished. This useful element is
carried from one house to another and, when worst comes to
worst, from one village to another. The Pangwe does not need
to rekindle his fire, since it burns all day in the meeting house
where it serves as a protection against cold, moisture, and sand
flies, while in the dwellings it is kept going day and night for
cooking and heating purposes. When the women go to the planta-
[192] tions, the logs are so carefully arranged (for this action alone,
there are four different expressions!) that they continue to glow;
or the youngest daughter may be given the task of guarding the
vestal altar. In case the fire should actually go out in one house,
fire is obtained from a neighboring house, and it is only in ex-
ceptional cases that a smaller village has no fire. In such an
emergency fire is sent for from the nearest settlement.

373 Better lighting than the hearth fire is provided by the torch
light with which /80/ /Fig. 44 appears here in the original text/
the village square is illuminated at night when, for instance,
dances are held. The flickering of the torches causes the strange
and wild movements of the dancers to appear even more fantastic
than they really are. The torches are composed of dried stalks
[824] of the cardamom Aframomum alboviolaceum K. Sch. (adzŏm;
stalk, kō'mō IV Fang, kūū'me IV Ntum), Plate 21 in Section 11
/Vol. 2/, or finely spliced raffia stalk strips (ekă'ba), which —
when they are well dried — burn very brightly but, on the other
hand, are rather rapidly consumed.

373 The finest but an infrequently used source of light at festivi-
357 ties or other events in the village square is the resin lamp (otu =
824 resin), Figure 43, a little tub of bark containing the fragrant resin
384 of the Anacardiacea Canarium schweinfurthii Engl. (1) (abê Ntum,
obê Fang; resin = otŭ).

1. According to the communication of Doctor Mildbraed who has likewise collected this tree.

244 (Drawings f-h). The variety osă'bŏme (f) has the largest fruit; it is about 15 centimeters long, a bright yellowish-green with vague, speckled markings, and slightly narrowed toward the middle. In the case of the second variety (g), nia ngŏn (the real ngon) or nsūsūte (the dark ngon), the fruit, in contrast to that of the first kind, is usually oviform, twelve centimeters long, and dark green with streaks or strips of a light green color; sometimes the fruit is spotted. This variety appears to be the most common. Finally, mŏne ngŏn, the small ngon (h), is considerably smaller, measuring only nine to ten centimeters, rarely more, and it is brighter. Here the speckled marking, which we have already observed in osă'bŏme, is so blurred that one can speak of bright green specks on a somewhat darker background. As regards the seeds, I counted 190-200 in the case of osă'bŏme, 224 in the case of nsūsūte, and only 80 in the case of mŏne ngŏn. The seeds are pear-shaped (e) and white, and only the inside is eaten. Frequent crossings appear among the fruit although on one and the same plant fruit of the same variety is usually found, and hence it is possible to speak of genuine species, just as in the case of apples and pears.

244 262 Among the seven chief food plants, ngon occupies fourth place. Only among the Jaunde does it take fifth place, while maize has moved to fourth. I cannot determine whether it was only the drier climate of Jaunde country that caused maize which thrives in a dry climate to be preferred to ngon which grows more successfully in the rainy southern and western Pangwe region. In any case, ngon is of such importance for the huge Pangwe region and far beyond it that one would think considerable space would be devoted to it in technical books about tropical cultivated plants /94/. As it happens, however, the plant is not mentioned by Sadebeck, Fesca, or anywhere else.

244 ●773 Concerning the origin of the name, the Fang tell the following little story. At first the name ngŏn was quite unknown; the plant was simply called by the general name ekŭluga (from a kŭt, "to crack," because the seeds are opened by being cracked, and this is a general expression for all fruits that are opened by cracking and have an edible interior, for instance, andŏk = Irvingia, etc.). Furthermore, ngon was not yet cultivated as it

244 is today; instead, women gathered its fruit in the bush. Once
773 upon a time, there was a man who had no sister he could sell to obtain a wife for himself, nor did he have any other person who could help him to get married. He hit upon the idea of starting a huge ngon farm, and when the ngon was ripe many people came and bought the kernels. In this way he finally earned so much money that he had the purchase price for a girl. When other people, who likewise had no wives, heard about this, they began to imitate him and also married through the aid of the plant. Hence, it is said: "Oh, I see this plant like a girl (ngó'n), and therefore it shall be called ngón also, for if the man had had no ngon (ngǒn), he would not have been able to marry a girl
[194] (ngō'n)." It should be noted that the two words differ in pitch; the word for the plant has falling pitch in Fang (ngôn), rising pitch in Jaunde (ngǒn), whereas the word for girl has only high pitch (ngō'n). A narrative in the creation story is very similar.

244 Ngon is planted only once a year since its cultivation requires the period from April to December. In April, frequently long before, the bush is cut and burned. The ground, however, is not cleared, and everything is left lying just as it fell; at most the largest brushwood is removed from the connecting paths. Walking through a farm, especially along the plantation paths, is therefore quite a gymnastic feat. A ngon farm is often cleared
[476 communally by the inhabitants of two neighboring villages who
602] belong to the same kin group. To the uninitiated, however, the boundaries are not discernible. They are indicated by trees that have been left standing or have fallen over and more rarely by lianas tied to the branches of tree trunks lying on the ground. It is astonishing that no boundary disputes arise.

244 In April, once the farm area has been burned over, the
462 women go into the fields, and with their universal tool, the hoe, they plant the ngon seeds in the ground. The seeds must first have been soaked in water for a day, and two or three of them are planted in the same hole. Because of the tree trunks and the brush lying about, planting is hard work, and for this reason the men usually assist at the task, at least on the first day, equipped with /95/ /Fig. 53 appears here in the original text/ hoes and digging

789 but even that seems to be dying out for its meaning is frequently
178 no longer understood. Thus I once (on an earlier occasion) found an open cooking pot set up as rain medicine; I simply could not understand this until I saw the authentic medicine and was informed that in the first case a mistake had been made.

821 According to one conception, the rainbow is the handiwork of a great sorcerer who wanted to show the others what he was capable of performing. Other natives think the rainbow is water vapor or smoke, and when it appears in the east, late in the afternoon, people say jokingly that one end is standing in the Campo and the other end in the Uelle. A third notion concerning the rainbow -- and this one is probably based on its iridescent colors -- is that it represents a water snake. The word for rainbow is, accordingly, nyū-n̄ III, from nyŏ', "water snake." In addition, there is ntūtŭ'm I, derived from the onomatopoetic expression tŭmetŭmetŭm, a designation for a flickering in front of the eyes.

The Tale concerning the Origin of the Rainbow

821 Once upon a time the grandmother of Ekute Essamniámabŏge
539 said to her grandson: "Go and show me the place where your mother
773 always catches fish." Thereupon Ekute went along with her and showed her a good place along the river, but his grandmother said: "No, this was not the place." Then her grandson showed her another place, but here, too, the grandmother said: "This is not the place where I am going to fish." They went together this way to four other places, but at none did the grandmother want to fish. Finally, the grandson said: "There are no more places for fishing; after this there is only the large river left." The grandmother replied: "All right, that is where we shall go." But her grandson said: "Oh, the places where everybody fishes are here, but in the big river the fishing is poor." However, the grandmother answered: "But I want to take a look at the place; come along, we shall leave right away." Thereupon the grandson went along with her, and when they came to the spot where the river widened, the grandmother said: "Here is where I want to fish." The grandson

821 again advised her against this, but the grandmother refused to give
773 in, went into the water, and tried to drive the water away (1),
539
[226]

1. In smaller watercourses the water is removed by splashing it away; in larger rivers this is, of course impossible.

but in doing so she got in deeper and /200/ deeper until she was up to her neck in the water. Then she said to Ekute: "Bring me two sticks and lay them in the water so that I can stand on them." This Ekute did, and the grandmother removed the water and fished, and lo and behold, she soon had ten baskets full of fish. Then her grandson said: "Come, we have enough now, let's go home." But the grandmother said: "No, first I want to get all the fish out of the water; then I will surpass all people in fishing." Thus, she went on fishing, but then, all of a sudden, the water rose up to her neck and over her mouth, and finally she disappeared under the water. At that moment there arose out of the water a great snake (1), and when Ekute saw it, he seized his

1. In other words, the grandmother was a sorceress.

spear to kill it. Then the snake said: "Wait! I have something to say to you." Ekute, however, ran away into the village and called all the people, above all his father whom he already met on the way; the latter took spears and went with him to the river. When he saw the snake, he wanted to kill it with his spear. But the snake said: "Wait a moment, I have something to say." Then the snake commanded the people to make a basket and to carry it /the snake/ into the village. This was done, and when the snake had been brought into the village and had been assigned a house to sleep in, it said: "No, I want to sleep in the first house next to the meeting house." The people complied with this wish. Soon the rumor spread everywhere that a great snake was to be seen in the village, and many, many people came to see it. Everybody had to pay a lot of money for this, about as much as ten marks.

821 Thus Essamniámaböge became very wealthy, and from this money
773 alone he was able to purchase two wives.
539 Now it happened that he and all the people were gone one day, and only his son, Ekute, stayed behind. Then several people from a distant village appeared, but they had brought with them only two choppers (2), and in exchange for these they demanded

2. Bush knives valued at two marks.

to see the snake. Ekute, however, did not want to show it to them. The people argued with him and threatened, and they demanded to see the snake. Then Ekute, who was very imprudent, angrily took a chopper and knocked in the top of the house wall instead of carefully opening the door somewhat and letting the people look in. Thereupon the snake came out, went to the village square, and cried "See, now I am leaving." But the people and Ekute had run off. Thereupon the snake raised its head and body and swung itself into the air. At this very moment Ekute's father came back and was just able to cut off the lower end of the snake; the other part of the snake was already high up in the air and still stands in the sky today as the rainbow. The tail, however, turned into the python, and from the eggs there crept forth all the other little snakes. /201/

821 The storm is likewise represented as the handiwork of an evil
789 sorcerer. Whenever a great sorcerer is dying, he unleashes a storm,
[754] lays low the plantain fields of those people toward whom he feels ill will, destroys their houses, and indeed, he goes so far as to knock down their children in order to injure them. Anyone who has experienced a tropical tornado will understand the notion of the Pangwe that sorcerous beings are at work. The natives also have medicines against storms; the storm is gradually weakened if
[824] one places young macabo leaves (these are weak to begin with) on the fire (whereby they become still weaker) and then grinds them to a powder on the ground in front of the house (this makes them weakest of all). Conversely, the storm is "made heavy" and thereby held back in the sky by placing a stone on Paspalum grass (obū't), which, because of its toughness and strength, is supposed

173 In the past Nzame lived a life which his children still live today,
173 proceeding westward as he abandoned villages in which he had lived with his wives and which he vacated after the fields had been exhausted. The number of his wives was so great that it was not known, and his villages were so important that at their sites the forest could not grow back, and this is why there are now plains in the midst of the forest in the Pahouin country.

Nzame arrived at the end of the earth, which is flat, and came up against the sky barring his way, an iron roof covering the earth as a roof covers a hut, and held up at its center by an invisible stake which [68] has since been held up by Ningone Maboere, sister of Nzame. He went to the other side of the sky after having crossed a very wide river, Endam, into which all the rivers empty and which flows all around the earth and under it, bursting through at the thinnest points so as to emerge in the form of springs. Then Nzame stopped and established the village Dzo, which he has not left since.

It is in this village that Nzame still lives with his wives and children. His life is the same as on earth, and there he welcomes the dead and keeps the elements imprisoned, the sun, moon, rain, etc...

773 Every morning, when Okwal the wild fowl calls, Nzame goes to
821 open the door of the hut where the sun sleeps. The sun wakes up, gets on its way, goes around the sky, and returns in the evening when everyone is in bed, to rest in the hut which it left in the morning. The sun is a large ball of fire which gives heat and light as it burns.

The moon also is imprisoned in the village Dzo. It is a large white stone which Nzame regularly shows to the people at night in different phases: small, larger, entirely round, then smaller and smaller, until he hides it for a few days. Because of its whiteness, the moon also gives light.

The rainbow is a big snake which is seen when Nzame gives it permission to go out and drink water from the river.

Sometimes Nzame also opens the door of another hut, and rain comes out, preceded by wind. Rain falls through holes pierced in the sky, which allow the lights of the Dzo village, or the shining eyes of the dead which look at the earth, to be seen at night. These luminous holes are the stars. Sometimes lightning comes out of the hut at the same time as the rain. The former is a little animal that falls on the trees and breaks them, making a noise. In the dry season the rain goes back to the hut, and it is seen at night or in the morning in the form of great white mists rising above the lakes and rivers.

713 821 Nzame has much work in his village, but he does not disdain to enjoy himself. He causes tomtom dances to be performed on the sky, and the noise of the dancers' feet is called thunder. From time to time also, when there is an eclipse, it is Nzame who takes pleasure in frightening people by plunging them into darkness at midday.

776 II. The evur. The evur or evus (plural, bivur) appears to be an individual spirit which plays a fundamental role in the life of the Pahouin. Not all persons have an evur. To have an evur, one must have received it from a person who has one. Such a person is called nem (plural, beyem). A child in the foetal state carried by its mother [69] can receive an evur even without the knowledge of the mother. One can tell by its weight that a newborn has an evur; only a nem, on lifting a child in his arms, can say that he has felt the weight of the evur, imperceptible to anyone else.

776 852 If at its birth a child has no evur, it can then receive one. The evur given it is either good (evur mve) or evil (evur abi).

(1) Good evur. In the case of a good evur, the donor of this evur, who is always an elder of the tribe, comes often to see the child until [856] the latter can count to ten, that is to say, at about seven or eight years of age. At this time the child is considered intelligent enough to understand what is expected of him, and then the ceremony called akaġa is performed.

[824] All the beyem of the village are invited to meet at a tree called ovaṅ (Didelotia africana), chosen from among all the others as the fetish tree because of its size, its longevity, and its resistance to tornadoes. The child is brought there; then the donor of the evur, in the presence of the assembled beyem, pronounces the wishes which he makes for the child's future. He wishes him wealth, strength, success, in general all that which will make him happy. For little girls the wishes are more particularly that they may later have many children, that they may be strong for their planting tasks, and that they may be esteemed by the other wives of their future husbands.

A kind of soup called nam akaġa, the preparation of which is secret, is made on the occasion of this ceremony. Each time the donor of the evur makes a wish, the child must take a little nam. For example, if the wish is for him to have ten wives, this is made with the following words:

e mon ni, nam ma ke we wi oluġ bunega awum
That child, the soup I give you here marries ten wives,

5: Balandier--109 E-5 (1946-1951) 1955 FH9 Fang FH9

V. First Reactions to Material Inferiority

556 441 The access of the Fang to the traditional trade regions has had great consequences. What started out as a conquering and "colonizing" undertaking has imperceptibly changed into a search for manufactured "riches" (bium) and [157] competition for trade routes and trade centers. The quest for "merchandise" is the primary male activity and sets in motion the machinery of war and witchcraft.

[462]

829 773 The legends which we know stress the attraction of the West as the country of white men who have all riches at their disposal. One of these told by V. Largeau suggests the importance of access to these trade zones:

"We arrive at last at the N'Tem and the Ogooué where we meet those who distribute riches ... they give us everything, we become rich." (1)

1. Op. cit., article: Instruction.

The legendary texts collected by Father Trilles under the title "Noirs et Blancs [The Blacks and the Whites]" are particularly significant. A predominant place is given to the theme of wealth, held only by the white men. Wealth has escaped the black men — because of a lack of technique and because of an attitude of abandoning rather than dominating the world, (2) or

2. "Proverbes, Légendes et Contes Fang [Fang Proverbs, Legends, and Tales]," op. cit., and especially "Noirs et Blancs [Blacks and Whites]" and "Légende du Nsas [Legend of the Nsas]."

has been stolen from them. (3) The whites apparently represent

3. "Legend of Bingo"; and "in order to seize his treasures (from the hero

829
773

> Bingo) and possess his secret, they killed him and took the green stone, the green stone he would have left us. Since then men from beyond the mountains possess the riches of the earth, but we have kept the laws of Bingo...."

wealth, they are mitâgõ, those who count. They have even been proclaimed by mythology. They have the physical appearance of ghosts, and they have at their disposal all the goods accumulated in the country of the ancestors. One can see therefore the powerful impression made by the arrival of the white man who was rich in merchandise, and the value, reinforced by the whole meaning of the myth, placed on this wealth. At the time of the clan regrouping movement, certain teachings in the form of question and answer continued to associate the two terms, power of the white man's example and pursuit of riches:

"--What life should we lead?
--We should lead the European life.
--What is the example we should give to lead the European life?
--We should work in order to earn money...." (4)

4. Cahier des réunions [Notebook of Gatherings], Yémisèm of Oyem.

444
167 At the beginning of this chapter we stressed the attraction of the economically strong centers -- the coast, the Lower Ogooué, Spanish Guinea. A map of the migrations makes [158] them appear like meeting points. At first the Fang settled in the outskirts of these centers or attracted the trading stations to themselves with a feeling of real appropriation. Du Chaillu and Cureau observed this phenomenon, the former by showing how "having become the white man of such-and-such a chief, " he "obtained well-being and security" but was obliged to give

441 presents." (1) The latter analyzed the Ogooué commerce which was

1. Voyages et Aventures dans l'Afrique Equatoriale [Travels and Adventures in Equatorial Africa], pp. 106 and 120.

"under the thumb of the Fang population": "Firms were obliged to maintain their establishments in definite localities and were forbidden under threat of hostilities to move them upstream. The European agent was respected; far from being disturbed, their stores were strictly protected by the village warriors. The merchant was a prisoner of the population; he found himself invested with a monopoly." (2)

2. Op. cit., pp. 294-295.

441 556 829 The first government reports continue to note, like Du Chaillu, the desire of each large grouping to have a trading post for itself; once satisfied they would relax and be submissive."(3)

3. Rapport annuel de 1907 [Annual Report of 1907], Archives of Gabon.

This behavior is not explained by the single economic anxiety to reserve for themselves a monopoly and to have at hand the possibility of bartering. To have a trading station in contact with the village itself is to have reached the end of migrations westward which were to lead to the source of wealth; it is to participate constantly in this wealth and to have the certainty of a superior life. To enter into relations with the white man, who appears both as an "eldest son" and more than a human being with his riches and knowledge of riches, this is to participate in a circuit of power and fecundity, and to transcend a somehow cursed existence in order to attain the "true life."

829 773 On the other hand, the legends show how, in contact with technical manifestations and European enterprise, the Fang very

829 soon developed a feeling of subjection and inferiority in wisdom
773 and riches. This is attributed to a decision of Nzamõ (God), to a veritable curse. A text collected by Largeau mentions two children of Nazmõ – Ekouagha (subjected) and Ndan'gho (ruler) – and the wishes expressed for each of these:

For Ndan'gho, the father says: "Riches! authority! wisdom!" [159] He adds: "All these things are in yourself!" Again he says: "You will beget white children." For Ekouagha, he cries out: "Alas! my other son has taken everything with the fortune ... There are no riches left for you ... you will beget black men ... you will be miserable..." (1) This is a theme comparable to that

1. Op. cit., article, Instruction.

of the "Legend of the Nsas" given by Father Trilles, in which Nazmõ [sic] ends by saying: "You, black man, rise and go and find your wives and populate the earth ... you will always remain naked as now ... You, white man, you will be rich, richer even than you were in your dream. You, the white man, will always be the white man, the black man will always be the black man, the white man will always be rich, the black man always poor..." (2)

2. Op. cit., Légende du Nsas
[Legend of Nsas].

829 The curse motif indicates the effective potentialities attached
773 to imported riches and their acquisition. Also there appears per-
177 haps the first awareness of the racial question and above all a technical insufficiency allied to a social organization that is wholly preoccupied with the production of human beings, (in the legend quoted, "go and find your wives and populate the earth" is part of the curse). The illusion of direct participation in riches was quickly destroyed, and the ascendancy of the agents of colonization became more specific and more complete. The theme of the curse attached to the race shows the extent of the deception. It is no longer possible to return to methods of violence. Witchcraft techniques then increase in number; recourse is had to knowledge revealed during fits brought on by the absorption of certain forms

829 of strychnine, and the idea, borrowed from Christianity, of a
773 better life after death becomes more specific. The effort at
177 adaptation dealt first with religious and magical techniques; in these fields much was borrowed from neighboring peoples (for example, the Bwiti cult of which we will speak later); customs are altered not in order to assimilate for purposes of conquest but simply for means of defense. The Fang people, reduced to a state of unemployed conquerors, lose the essential part of their moral strength. As we will show in the next chapter the Fang are one of those peoples that have most keenly suffered from crises due to the colonial situation and one of those that have reacted most to this threat.

776 A definition is added to these qualifiers, given by Mebe'e himself in reply to men who asked him what his name was, and reported by Largeau thus, the formula varying slightly in detail according to other writers: Mebe'e me se kôm, ke môt, ke minga, ke nyia, ke ésa, émien étam étam, ke yoo-yoé, a tame mebialé me bôt, which means, more or less, "Mebe'e, with no one, without wife, mother, father, all alone by himself, impenetrable (lit., 'not open,' perhaps in the sense of 'without beginning'), starts the generations."

Largeau gives weight to traditions that run counter to this concept of uniqueness, according to which Mebe'e (he connects the word with a verb meaning "to divide"?) would be none other than the sun and would have begotten man by a union with the female principle Anghe Ndongha, "universal womb" (?). But he himself admits the "vague" nature of these traditions "mumbled by a few old men."

Mebe'e is uncreated and eternal. He declares to the first man: A mon wôm, me se k'asum, me se k'aman, me ne fo'o mbembé, "O my son! I have no beginning (origin), no end, I am in truth he that endures (bembe = to be fixed)."

773 "Feeling lonely by himself," writes Trilles, Mebe'e, "when things were not yet," decides to create man (môt = a person /persona?--Tr./. He creates a lizard out of clay and five days later puts it into a bowl of water (sea water, according to Trilles) where he leaves it for seven full days. On the eighth day he shouts, "Come forth!" Man comes out and gives thanks. Trilles rightly emphasizes the beauty of the scene: Alu mwom ane a nga ke dé'é, nyina: Ku'i! A nga kui, a to môt. Ane, a nga kutubu meboñ, nyina: Abotan. "On the eighth day (lit., the eighth night) then, he goes to look, then: Come forth! (lit., Emerge!). It emerges; it is a man. And he falls on his knees: Thanks!" (lit., Praises!)"

This first man is called Nzame or Zambe (Boulou, Zobeyo) or, more accurately, Nzame Mebe'e. According to the tradition reported by Largeau, he gave himself this name at the time he gave the creator the name Mebe'e. According to others, Mebe'e named Nzame. The name may be related to the Fang verb dzame (Boulou, jame), meaning "to leave," "no longer to be concerned with," and also "to forgive a debt," "to pardon." Nzame would thus be "he who pardons" or "he who abandons," the form Zambe used in the north being a dialectal variant or perhaps a passive derivative. Trilles for his part attributes to Nzame the meaning of "the invisible one,"

773 translating the verb dzame by "to efface oneself, " explainable by Trilles' continually confusing Mebe'e and Nzame, the creator and the created. Nzame and Zambe can apparently be related to a whole series /of words/ with similar meaning in nearby Bantu languages and, perhaps, to the West Indian Creole zombi. But the relationship is less obvious with the Boulou Zobeyo, whose origin, which is obscure, is perhaps connected with the verbs zu, "to arrive" (in Boulou) or zũ, dzũ, "to open" (in Fang) and yoo or yooé, "to be open, " "to open"; /the meaning/ is approximately /109/ "opening of those who open, " in the sense of "first ancestor. "

Traditions differ about the origin of the first woman. Largeau gives two. According to one, Mebe'e, having taught Nzame to clear the forest and plant trees, puts him to sleep and, having cut off a large toe, fashions it into the first woman, Nyingono Mebe'e (Nyingon = mother-daughter). According to the other tradition, he would have fashioned at the same time as Nzame his sister, Oyeme = Mam (she-who-knows-things). My Ntoumou informant, who knew both legends, reconciled them by referring to the Bible, a common attitude among old Protestants in Gabon, who are made very uneasy by discrepancies between the Hebrew and the Pahouin Genesis.

In any event, Mebe'e makes all animals subject to the first man and woman so that they will work for them. But Nzame disturbs this arrangement by fornicating with his sister: this is the great nsem, the breaking of a prohibition, the initial incest that introduces death to the earth. Mebe'e "dies" or, rather, removes himself from mankind and departs, leaving to Nzame, whom the animals have ceased to obey, authority over the world.

Oyeme-Mam then brings forth eight sets of twins, male and female, who are the ancestors of the Pahouin, the white men, Pygmies, gorillas, chimpanzees, red men, and the coastal tribes.

Not much is known of the next bit of the legend because the versions vary greatly according to the reporter. Roughly, Nzame teaches agricultural methods to his children and goes to seek from Mebe'e (by dying, to be resurrected later?) the secrets of the crafts (1).

1. According to some, these were taught by the spider.

Before leaving his children in final "death, " (he does not, in fact, die

physically: "His tomb is neither above nor below, neither to the right nor to the left"), he divides his possessions, a division which is disturbed by quarrels, the machinations of younger sons or the negligence of the elder ones. He then departs beyond the river-of-the west, followed by the white men (or the coastal tribes?) who by a ruse have got hold of part of the bîôm inherited by the Pahouin. The latter in turn start westward, crossing the Osoe Nnanga, then the nlôm adjap (hole in the silk-cotton tree) as described earlier (see p. 19).

Nzame (Zambe) is emphatically not the creator god but the ancestor = mentor; all genealogies go back to him. Yet all the Christian missions have taken his name to express the idea of God. This mistake has come about because the word Mebe'e was rarely spoken, while Nzame turned up in all "salutations," in everything that had to do with the ancestor cult. As the original monitor he could be confused with the creator — in fact, he in a way completed "natural" creation by the magical invention of the arts and crafts. As an ancestor he was solicited in prayers (meya'alan) by his descendants, while Mebe'e was not addressed except on rare occasions—in solemn vows, at initiations. Finally, the very fact of having been misled from the first /110/ made it difficult to go back to the first translation. It may well be though that this mistake, the substitution of the creature for the creator, the deification of man, has not been without influence on the social development of the Pahouin. The Mintangan, who actually came from the nlam bekôn, the land of the dead, brought with them a genuine theological revolution, a heresy to which the material wealth gave a sure guarantee. The psychological repercussions must have been considerable.

Nowadays one hears it currently said that "Mebe'e is the old name for Zambe," and the latter seems to be permanently established in his usurped role (1); the traditions connected with the two personages

1. Good, the first American missionary among the Boulou, was nicknamed "Ngôô Zambe," Zambe's ransom, which may have been not merely an approximation of his name.

are inextricably mixed with Christian contributions, to such a degree that we may speak of a new theogony being formed in the syncretist cults and in some Christian schismatic movements.

769 also discriminates between the ésayoñ, ancestor cult /112/, and the
64 mvamayoñ, totemic cult. It must be admitted that there is now no
114 chance of obtaining a cross-checking of his theories except on points of detail, although that is no formal condemnation of his theories; it is the consequence of a shortage of researchers, lack of respect on the part of the researchers, or loss of traditions of initiation. The following points may be considered as established:

mvam (émvam) connotes ideas of a forefather, dead or alive, lineal and protective.

[784] akam, protection, is sometimes used in speaking of animals, to indicate the reason for a prohibition; the verb kam having a defending-protecting meaning as well as that of forbidding-prohibiting.

All prohibitions are not tied up with these notions, but some are and they may well be individual prohibitions as well as hereditary collective ones, not necessarily involving animals.

Clan markings, mindem, and tattoo marks, mindan, are often connected with a prohibition.

825 There is a whole system of animal symbolism, evident particularly
[787] in tales and augury ("zoomancy," divination by spiders).

Certain animals are connected with initiation cults: very definitely the sô and snakes (dendraspis and python); probably the porcupine and tortoise (with feminine rites); perhaps the gorilla (njil; ngil, Johnson's tone 4, the ngil rite having tone 5).

[55] There does not appear to be any connection between an animal name borne by a person (Mvômê • Python, Zo'o • Elephant, Ze • Panther, etc.) and the prohibitions he is subject to.

Moreover, the following, it seems pretty certain, are not specifi-
64 cally related to totemism:
825

Alliance, élat or ngbwa, between a person and a particular animal.

A sorcerer's employing an animal, nkuk (observe that nkuk also means "mask") to carry out his sorcery at a distance.

[775] The incarnation of a sorcerer in the body of an animal, élañela (Trilles applies this name to the nkuk).

The temporary incarnation of a dead man in an animal's body.

The first three phenomena often seem to be confused in the minds of present-day Pahouin, and the fourth may be the consequence of this.

773 It is curious that the legend recounted by Trilles about the crocodile, which he considers to be the "national totem," represents

773 the animal pursuing the ancestors of the Fang in order to devour them, while the legendary history of migration collected in the north shows, on the contrary, the crocodile enabling the tribe to cross the Osoé Nnanga (the python performs this service for the Beti).

776 The observation made by the authors quoted on the "unsuperstitious" character of the Pahouin and of the slight development /113/ of "fetishism" among them is to be related to the almost total absence in their mythology of beings intermediary between God and man, genii or demigods.

774 825 Aside from the bivur, to be discussed in connection with sorcery, there are only the bingungur (Fang) (Boulou, bingôngôt) shown in some legends as kinds of ogres or ghouls haunting forests and attacking travelers. According to another interpretation, these rather are evil animals endowed with intelligence and malevolence beyond that of normal members of their species, perhaps animal sorcerers. The inoffensive aardvark, mvômesila, is thus very much feared; also a sort of very rare Pithecanthropus (Fang, éngure; Boulou, éngu'u) and a mermaid, the mammywôta of the coast, no doubt a lamantin /or manatee/. For Trilles, the éngungure is a "spirit, often transformed into an animal, which sorcers obey"; may there not be a confusion here with the évur (Boulou, évu)?

775 769 As for ghosts, bekôn, it might be said that there are good ones but no nice ones. One may usually get on with the kôn of a properly buried forebear who was respected in his lifetime and even obtain useful services from him, formerly paid for by sacrifices and libations to his skull and often today by candles, Masses, or prayers (I have known Protestants to go to Catholic missionaries for exorcism). There is more difficulty /in dealing/ with the kôn of a sorcerer or with that of a stranger neither whose name nor whose skull is in one's possession.

772 777

266 Lawful /non criminelle/ anthropophagy probably had for an end, among others, that of acquiring power over the bekôn of enemies and perhaps of assimilating the rights they derived from their ancestors. This wartime cannibalism appears to have existed especially on the geographical fringes of the group and particularly along the invasion front, among the Fang proper, the vanguard of the migration. A relative or affinal kin was never eaten, only strangers, and these only by warriors (or sometimes by sons of warriors killed by the enemy). It is worth noting that for the cannibalism of the Fang and Osyéba only the "Gabonese" felt the terror described by all explorers. The